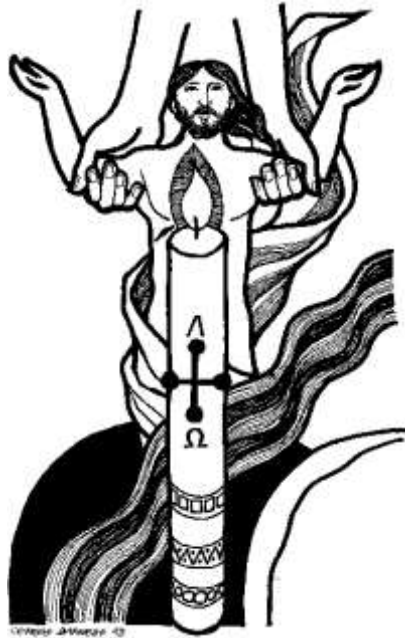


ANGLICAN PARISH OF BOX HILL

THE GREAT VIGIL OF EASTER



LIGHTING OF THE NEW FIRE,
RENEWAL OF BAPTISM PROMISES,
AND THE FIRST EUCHARIST OF
EASTER

THE SERVICE OF LIGHT

Dear friends in Christ, on this most holy day,
when our Lord Jesus Christ passed from death to life,
the Church invites believers throughout the world
to come together in vigil and prayer.

This is the Passover of the Lamb, Jesus Christ.
We remember his death and celebrate resurrection,
confident that we shall share his victory
and live with him forever in God.

The following prayer is said:

Holy God,
you gave your Name to Moses from the burning bush.
By the blessing of this new fire,
bring us to stand with awe on this holy ground,
our eyes alight with the glory we have seen in Christ,
and our hearts aflame with resurrection joy,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*The Paschal candle is marked by the presider with a cross and traces
Alpha and Omega and the numerals of the current year on it.*

The Paschal candle is lit from the new fire and the presider says:

May the light of Christ, rising in glory,
dispel the darkness of our hearts and minds.

The minister takes the Paschal candle, lifts it high and sings:

The light of Christ
Thanks be to God.

The Paschal candle is placed in its stand.

The Easter Collect:

Glorious Lord of life,
by the mighty resurrection of your Son
you overcame the old order of sin and death
to make all things new in him:
grant that we,
who celebrate with joy Christ's rising from the dead
may be raised from the death of sin
to the life of righteousness;
through him who lives and reigns with you
and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD

Acts 10.34-43

³⁴ Then Peter began to speak to them: 'I truly understand that God shows no partiality, ³⁵ but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. ³⁶ You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ – he is Lord of all. ³⁷ That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: ³⁸ how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. ³⁹ We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree; ⁴⁰ but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, ⁴¹ not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. ⁴² He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. ⁴³ All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.'

Hymn to the Risen Christ (in place of the Psalm)

Christ our Passover has been sacrificed for us:
so let us celebrate the feast,
Not with the old leaven of corruption and wickedness:
but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

Christ once raised from the dead dies no more:
death has no more dominion over him.
In dying he died to sin once for all:
in living he lives to God.
See yourselves therefore as dead to sin:
and alive to God in Jesus Christ our Lord.
Christ has been raised from the dead:
the first fruits of those who sleep.
For as by one man came death:
by another has come also resurrection of the dead;
For as in Adam all die:
even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

Colossians 3.1-4

¹ So if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ² Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth, ³ for you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴ When Christ who is your life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory.

The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John, chapter 20, beginning at verse 1

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. ² So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him." ³ Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went toward the tomb. ⁴ The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. ⁵ He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. ⁶ Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, ⁷ and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. ⁸ Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; ⁹ for as yet they

did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead.

¹⁰Then the disciples returned to their homes.

¹¹But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb; ¹²and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. ¹³They said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him." ¹⁴When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. ¹⁵Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?" Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away." ¹⁶Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to him in Hebrew, "Rabbouni!" (which means Teacher). ¹⁷Jesus said to her, "Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" ¹⁸Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord"; and she told them that he had said these things to her.

THE SERMON

Text: John 20.1-18

Theme: I have seen the LORD

Let us pray:

O Saviour Christ, in whose way of love lies the secret of all life, and the hope of all people, we pray for quiet courage to match this hour. We did not choose to be born or to live in such an age; but let its problems challenge us, its discoveries exhilarate us, its injustices anger us, its possibilities inspire us, and its vigour renew us, for your kingdom's sake. Amen.

There is no doubting that this Easter is unlike any other in our lifetimes. It is a bit surreal being here in St Peter's Anglican Church, Box Hill with just four other people endeavouring to do our first live stream service out to all parishioners and others who might be watching on our You Tube channel. It's also surreal to think that

there are others who are reading this sermon as part of the Easter Day liturgy which has been delivered to those without a computer. So much has changed for us and the world in just the last month that it is easy for us to doubt our faith in a loving God. It has been hard to remain calm! There has been rising levels of anxiety and worry over what will happen; sadness over the ever growing list of those who have died; and no small amount of fear about my own health and those in my family, especially my two Grandmas who are well into their nineties. And yet here we be on Easter Day in the year of our Lord 2020 - The Lord is risen - he is risen indeed!

I am reminded of an event when I was the chaplain to the then Primate, the Right Reverend Dr Peter Carnley, back in the early part of this century, in Perth, Western Australia. The Diocese had arranged for a visiting evangelist from England to give a day workshop for clergy. Now my experience to that point of workshops had not been great - there had been too many that were not worth the money and effort to attend. The only positive thing about them was the opportunity to catch up with some clergy friends. And added to this underlying cynicism was the fact that at that stage in my life I wasn't that overly fond of evangelists. My impression was of people who came across as too slick, too naïve and too all black-and-white.

People who were not really connected to the real world where there was a lot of grey areas and life always came with nuances. So you are getting the picture that I was attending this workshop more out of a sense of obedience and compliance than out of any real desire to be there. I was sitting in the back row with my arms folded tightly across my chest - sitting with a group of hard-nosed cynic priests - very sadly I admit now - waiting to criticise this invited speaker and his address mercilessly. Definitely not thinking that this address would change my life!

From memory I believe he gave a pretty standard 'apologetic' presentation of the Gospel and about how we should be more fired up and eager to spread the love of God and about how we clergy should be on the front lines - railing against the idols of our day. The

sheer audacity of the man – telling us clergy what we should be doing! But that wasn't the moment! It was when one of my friends asked him why we should be doing this? Prefacing his question with a rundown of the situation in Australia: of an apathetic society full of consumer driven anxious hard nose cynics who were for at least two if not three generations suspicious of the church and not open to the Gospel in any way, shape or form.

The speaker paused and pondered, nodded his head, and then said the words that went straight to my heart, "Well, yes, I am not from here, and all that you say may well be true. But, it doesn't negate one other truth that makes all the difference. The Lord is risen --he is risen indeed!" He went on to say, "The problem we have and the trap we fall into is that we turn faith into such a subjective thing – when it should be approached at times much more objectively – Jesus is LORD and that is true."

Jesus is LORD and that is true. That is THE TRUTH! Every Easter we are reminded of what we should say every day – The Lord is risen – he is risen indeed. Now I'm as prone to feelings of doubt and anxiety and fear and sadness as any one of us and there are times – perhaps like the one we are all living through now – when I have allowed my feelings to question this truth. And I suppose this is okay for it is a natural human trait to be fearful and anxious when faced with calumnious circumstances. But as Christians – people of the Way – people following the Risen Christ in the power of the Spirit – in fact people who live and move and have our being in the presence of the Triune God – we live this truth. We live this truth despite all evidence to the contrary. We live this truth as to be the proof for others of the reality of God. And even if our faith is tested; sorely tested as at the present; and even if we feel like our faith is but a small dimly burning wick – we can rest confidence today that it doesn't matter in the slightest what we feel – because regardless of how we feel and the subjective level of our own faith – the truth is the truth – Jesus is Lord and the Lord is Risen – he is risen indeed! Hallelujah!

There are others far more eloquent and inspiring than me and in

preparation for this sermon I have been reading and listening to a lot of sermons eager to see how others are preaching this truth in our current challenging circumstance. One particular sermon I came across reflected upon a 2004 Easter sermon from Rowan Williams, the former Archbishop of Canterbury. In his beautiful words about the ongoing significance of resurrection, we can see the Lord; we see the radical nature of the Easter faith we profess during this season of illness and death. So I'll close by sharing his words:

“The goodness of the resurrection news is most evident for those who have lost people they love to any sort of incomprehensible evil - the tragedies of dementia, the apparent meaninglessness of accident, the horrors of violence or injustice. Think back for a moment to the days when death squads operated in countries like Argentina or El Salvador: the Christians there developed a very dramatic way of celebrating their faith, their hope and their resistance. At the liturgy, someone would read out the names of those killed or 'disappeared', and for each name someone would call out from the congregation, Presente, 'Here'.

“When the assembly is gathered before God, the lost are indeed presente; when we pray during the Eucharist 'with angels and archangels and the whole company of heaven', we say presente for all those the world (including us) would forget and God remembers. With angels and archangels; with the butchered Rwandans of ten years ago and the butchered or brutalised Ugandan children of last week or yesterday; with the young woman dead on a mattress in King's Cross after an overdose and the childless widower with Alzheimer's; with the thief crucified alongside Jesus and all the thousands of other anonymous thieves crucified in Judaea by an efficient imperial administration; with the whole company of heaven, those whom God receives in his mercy. And with Christ our Lord, the firstborn from the dead, by whose death our sinful forgetfulness and lukewarm love can be forgiven and kindled to life, who leaves no human soul in anonymity and oblivion, but gives to all the dignity of a name and a presence. He is risen; he is not here; he is present everywhere and to all. He is risen: presente.”

Yes, Easter will feel different this year. But even now, angels accompany us in the darkness, faith remains possible, understanding will come, the voice of the risen Jesus calls us by name, and the God who destroyed death is ever able to turn our tears into joy. All is not lost. Remember: the Lord is risen – he is risen indeed.

The Lord be with you.

RENEWAL OF BAPTISM VOWS

Dear friends,
through the paschal mystery
we have been buried with Christ in his baptism,
so that we may rise with him to new life.
Now that our Lenten observance is ended,
let us reaffirm the promises we made in baptism.

Do you turn to Christ?

I do.

Do you repent of your sins?

I do.

Do you renounce evil?

I do.

I ask you to reaffirm as yours the faith of the Church.

**We believe in one God,
who made and loves all that is.**

**We believe in Jesus Christ,
God's only Son, our Lord,
who was born, lived, died and rose again,
and is coming to call all to account.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit,
who calls, equips and sends God's people,
and brings all things to their true end.**

This is the faith of the Church.

This is our faith.

We believe in one God:

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Will you each, by God's grace,
strive to live as a disciple of Christ,
loving God with your whole heart,
and your neighbour as yourself,
until your life's end?

I will with God's help.

God our creator,
Rock of our salvation,
has given us new birth by water and the Spirit,
and forgiven our sins
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
May God keep us faithful to our calling
now and for ever. **Amen.**

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

We give you thanks that at the beginning of creation your Holy Spirit moved upon the waters to bring forth light and life. With water you cleanse and replenish the earth; you nourish and sustain all living things.

Thanks be to God.

We give your thanks for your Son Jesus Christ: for his baptism by John, for his anointing with the Holy Spirit.

Thanks be to God.

We give you thanks that through the deep waters of death, Jesus delivered us from our sins and was raised to new life in triumph.

Thanks be to God.

We give you thanks for the grace of the Holy Spirit who forms us in the likeness of Christ and leads us to proclaim your kingdom.

Thanks be to God.

And now we give you thanks that we are made one with Christ in his death and resurrection.

Pour out your Holy spirit in blessing, that this water may be a sign of our new birth in Baptism. May we continue for ever in Jesus Christ our Lord, in the unity of the Spirit, now and for ever. **Amen.**

THE INTERCESSIONS

Risen Lord Jesus,

Your tomb is empty. Our churches are empty. Roll away the stone of our fear and despair. Lead us into the light of your risen life.

Risen Lord Jesus: **Hear our prayer.**

Risen Lord Jesus

We are separated from those we love. Some are on their own. Some have no internet connection. Help us to know that in our isolation we are together in your love and that you are alive and with us always.

Risen Lord Jesus: **Hear our prayer.**

Risen Lord Jesus, we pray for those who risk themselves as they care for the sick and carry on essential services. We pray for doctors, nurses and health and hospital workers. We pray for police and emergency services, for childcare workers and teachers, for supermarket workers and all who offer themselves to meet our needs.

Risen Lord Jesus: **Hear our prayer.**

Risen Lord Jesus, we pray for those who live in danger: for people on ships, for those who struggle to survive in refugee camps, for those who live in crowded cities and places where it is impossible to maintain social distance, for people out of reach of medical facilities, for people who live in remote communities for our indigenous people.

Risen Lord Jesus: **Hear our prayer.**

Risen Lord Jesus, by your death and resurrection you make us a new people: bless your church, help us to trust in you and become beacons of light and hope, bless our clergy and all those who are working to help us connect online.

We especially pray to-day for the Peace of Jerusalem and the People of the Land of the Holy One; for the churches in Palestine and Israel, for the people whose land, homes and livelihood are being taken away. We pray especially for the million people crowded together in Gaza. We pray for the Diocese of Armidale, the Victoria Council for Spiritual Health and for Cheryl Holmes, their CEO; and for the parish St Stephen's and St Mary's, Mount Waverley. We pray for this parish, for Shane and Janet, for Esther, for Joseph, for Barbara, for Betty and Alasdair. We pray for Philip our Archbishop and for Genieve our Bishop.

Risen Lord Jesus: **Hear our prayer.**

Risen Lord Jesus, when we suffer, we know that you suffer with us. May the light of your resurrection shine on all who are sick, those who live with pain, with mental illness and depression, those who have had surgery postponed, for those who live in dangerous and violent homes and relationships and those who mourn and are unable to attend funeral of friends and loved ones. We pray especially for Russ, Betty, Jessie, Don, Jim, Alma, Muriel, Faye, Eileen, Nola and Margaret who are in special need at this time.

Risen Lord Jesus: **Hear our prayer.**

Risen Lord Jesus, you have overcome death and opened the door to life unlimited. We praise you for all your saints and our own loved ones who are close to us now as you are with us for ever. We remember Joe Plumridge, Marjorie Adair, Barbara Mack, John Colliver, Joyce Morton, Daniel Chamberlain, John Bird, Neil Chamberlain.

May they rest in peace and rise in glory.

Risen Christ,
whose absence leaves us paralysed but whose presence is
overwhelming.

Breathe on us with your abundant life that where we cannot see,
we may have courage to believe, that we may be raised with you.

THE GREETING OF PEACE

Christ is risen. Alleluia!

He is risen indeed. Alleluia!

The peace of the risen Lord be always with you.

And also with you.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING (for those watching this service live at home)

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

... for ever praising you and singing:

Holy, holy, holy Lord,

God of power and might,

heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

... let us proclaim the mystery of our faith

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

... in songs of never-ending praise:

Blessing and honour and glory and power

are yours for ever and ever. Amen.

As our Saviour Christ has taught us, we are confident to pray,

Our Father in heaven,

hallowed be your name,

your kingdom come,

**your will be done on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.**

THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD AND COMMUNION

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.
We who are many are one body,
for we all share in the one bread.

SENDING OUT GOD'S PEOPLE

Prayer after communion.

Let us pray;
**Most glorious Lord of life,
we thank you that you nourish us in these Easter mysteries.
Fill us with the Spirit of love and unite us in faith,
that we may witness to the resurrection
and show your glory to all the world.**

Go in the name of Christ. Alleluia, alleluia!
Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia!